

Appln. No.: 10/019,070
August 22, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April 8, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application :

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of dyeing a fabric material for use as a tennis ball covering, said material being a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns made from a mixture of wool and synthetic fibers, said method comprising the step of contacting said woven felt with a bleaching agent prior to or simultaneously with a fluorescent yellow dye providing said colour.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said yellow dye has a [colour] color index number acid yellow 250.
- 4.-5. (Cancelled)
6. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 15, wherein said synthetic [fibres] fibers are polyamide [fibres] fibers.
7. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 6, wherein said polyamide [fibres] fibers are [Nylon 6,6 fibres] nylon 6,6 fibers.
8. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the content of wool [fibres] fibers in said material is at least 20% by weight.
9. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the content of wool [fibres] fibers in said material is at least 25% by weight.
10. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the content of wool [fibres] fibers in said material is at least 40% by weight.
11. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns, and said weft yarns comprise at least 20% by weight of wool.

12. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns, and said weft yarns comprise at least 30% by weight of wool.

13. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns, and weft yarns comprise at least 40% by weight of wool.

14. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is processed in piece form.

15. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is contacted with a partitioning agent.

16. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 15, wherein said partitioning agent is an alkylarylsulphonate in water and comprises 50-60% by weight of the salt of dodecylbenzenesulphonic acid and triethanolamine.

17. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is treated dyed using a jet-dyeing apparatus.

18. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 17, wherein a liquor ratio of from 6:1 to 8:1 is used to run said jet-dyeing apparatus.

19. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in Claim 185, wherein the pH of the liquor has a pH is of from 4.2 to 4.5.

20. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said material is contacted with the bleaching agent prior to said material being contacted with said fluorescent dyestuff.

21. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 15, wherein said material is contacted with the partitioning agent prior to said material being contacted with said fluorescent dyestuff.

Appln. No.: 10/019,070
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22. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 15, wherein said bleaching agent is added simultaneously or quasi-simultaneously with the partitioning agent.

23. (Original) The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said bleaching agent is an inorganic reducing agent with chelating agents and comprises 30-40% by weight tetrasodium ethylene diaminetetraacetate and 30-40% by weight disodium disulphite.

24. (Currently amended) A [coloured] colored fabric material obtainable according to the method described in Claim 1.

25.-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently amended) A [coloured] colored (~~non-white~~) fabric material suitable for use in tennis sports ball manufacture, said material being a ~~woven~~ ⁶⁰⁻⁴⁰ ~~felt~~ ^{nylon 6.6} which ~~comprises~~ ^{includes} warp and weft yarns, wherein said material includes a mixture of wool and synthetic [fibres] fibers, which is dyed with a fluorescent yellow dye and exhibits the following characteristics:

- i) a chroma value of 110 or more;
- ii) a lightness value of 95 or more; and
- iii) a reflectance value of 125 or more.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Original) The fabric material as claimed in Claims 27, wherein said lightness value is 96 or more.

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Original) The fabric material as claimed in Claim 27, which exhibits the following characteristics:

- i) a chroma value of 110 or more;
- ii) a lightness value of 97 or more; and
- iii) a reflectance value of 128 or more.

32.-38. (Cancelled)

39. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 2738, wherein said synthetic [fibres] fibers are polyamide [fibres] fibers.

40. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 39, wherein said polyamide [fibres] fibers are [Nylon 6,6 fibres] nylon 6,6 fibers.

41. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 27, wherein the content of wool [fibres] fibers in said material is at least 20% by weight.

42. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 27, wherein the content of wool [fibres] fibers in said material is at least 40% by weight.

43. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 27, wherein said material is a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns, and said weft yarns comprise at least 20% by weight of wool.

44. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 27, wherein said material is a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns, and said weft yarns comprise at least 30% by weight of wool.

45. (Currently amended) A fabric material as claimed in Claim 27, wherein said material is a woven felt which comprises warp and weft yarns, and said weft yarn comprise at least 40% by weight of wool.

46. (Currently amended) A tennis sports ball having a comprising the fabric material of Claim 27 glued to the outer surface a rubber sphere, said fabric material being a fabric material as defined in Claim 27.

47. (Cancelled)

48. (Currently amended) A sports tennis ball having a comprising the fabric material obtained by the method of claim 1 glued to the outer surface of a rubber sphere, said fabric material being a fabric material as obtained by the method of Claim 1.

Appln. No.: 10/019,070
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49. (Cancelled)